

1888
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THE VISIT OF THE PRINCE OF WALES TO CANADA IN 1860.

MR. MORGAN'S REPLY TO "OBSERVER" IN FULL.

To the Editor of the Toronto Globe:

SIR,—As I was the "British Canadian" who compiled the book describing the visit of the Prince of Wales to this country in 1860* reference to which is made by "Observer" in your issue of Thursday last, I should feel obliged to be allowed space for a few words in reply. "Observer," as I make out, finds fault with the book for two reasons:—1st, with respect to the character of the references made in the introduction to the efforts of Mr. Norris to secure a visit from His Royal Highness; 2nd, with respect to certain alleged exuberant expressions in the same portion of the book denoting the loyalty and devotion of the Canadian people to the Queen and the Royal Family.

As regards the references to Mr. Norris, I have only to say that the facts were taken from the public prints of the day, and if "Observer" will turn to the files of the *Toronto Leader* and the *Toronto Colonist* for the year 1858 or thereabouts, he will, if he so desire, obtain ample corroboration of this statement. But "Observer" had only to refer to the book itself, where at page twelve, he would have found Sir E. B. Lytton's despatch to Sir E. W. Head, then Governor-General, in which Her Majesty's Government formally expressed regret that the petition, carried by Mr. Norris to Downing Street, had not been transmitted, according to usage, through the Governor of the province. Nevertheless, in the light of facts and circumstances which, in after years, came to my knowledge, I was convinced that Mr. Norris had not been generously treated by the press, and that, in consequence, he had been somewhat unfairly judged by the public. Acting upon this conviction, I then did what I could to make amends to him, in a suitable way, for my share in the general crusade against him, and I feel satisfied that he, at all events, cannot now have any cause of complaint against me.

With this explanation, respecting a gentleman who is now an officer in the same service as myself, and which explanation I am very glad, even at this late day, to have an opportunity of making, I turn to "Observer's" other objection. He would not scoff, he says, at loyalty, even when the word is used to signify simply attachment to the person of the reigning sovereign, but he thinks the references in the book to "Our Gracious and Beloved Queen," and "Her Beloved Son," etc., "a little strong," and ventures the opinion that no one but a crank would at the present day print such sentences. To this I would simply answer that the book, such as it is, reflects the joyous and enthusiastic feeling of the time—and when a comparison is instituted between the language sneered at by "Observer," and the tone and wording of many of the addresses sent from this country to Her Majesty on the occasion of Her jubilee, no further back than last year, there will, I venture to think, be found no need for

* *The Tour of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales through British America and the United States. By a British Canadian. Montreal: 1860.*

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excuse for the sincere enthusiasm of so young a loyalist as I was at the time of publication of the '*Prince's Tour*;' and it may be added, that this enthusiasm is all the more justifiable when emanating from one who, while having a proper attachment for the Head of the State, was and is actuated by feelings of no less becoming pride in the greatness and destiny of his native Canada.

Regarding the book as a whole, it was, in the opinion of competent critics, among whom may be mentioned the late Etienne Parent, the late Daniel Morrison, the late Chief Justice Harrison and Charles Sangster, the poet, a truthful record of a most interesting event in Canadian history, and was cordially recommended by them to the public as such, and as being the work of "a young British Canadian of good habits of application." The *Toronto Leader*, then an important organ of public opinion in Upper Canada, spoke of the volume as being the best collected account of the Prince's tour it had seen. The success of the book was unprecedented at that time, the entire edition, numbering 4,000, being disposed of within a few weeks. The joint committee of both Houses of Parliament, for the direction of the library of Parliament, of which the late Sir Allan McNab was chairman, purchased fifty copies, for distribution to exchanges, and in their report to Parliament, referred to the work as "a careful compilation which reflected credit on its youthful author." Her Majesty the Queen, the late Prince Consort and the Prince of Wales did me the honour to accept of presentation copies for which the royal thanks were returned in a despatch from the Duke of Newcastle. Copies were also accepted by the Duke of Newcastle, the Earl of St Germans and General Bruce, who had accompanied the Prince, and also by the then President of the United States, Mr. Buchanan, from all of whom I hold autograph letters speaking of the careful and judicious manner in which the book was executed. Until the appearance of "Observer's" strictures I never heard a word of complaint with respect to the book from any one, and it seems somewhat strange that it is only now, after the lapse of nearly a generation, that anything like an attack is made. I can hardly think that such is offered in good faith, and with the honest instincts of a broad-minded, liberal writer.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Ottawa, 28th July, 1888.

HENRY JAMES MORGAN.